

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships
CHILD CARE	Subject: Child Eligibility - Overview

Supersedes: Child Care 1-8 (7/01/03)

References: Sections 52-2-701-704, 52-2-711-713, 53-4-610 MCA;
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302,
37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM
45 CFR Part 98

General Rule The child, the parents, and the child care provider must qualify to participate in the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program. Child eligibility requirements are detailed in this section.

US Citizenship Montana administers the Child Care and Development Fund through private non-profit Child Care Resource and Referral agencies. There is no requirement for such agencies to determine or verify US citizenship for children receiving Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships.

**Montana
Residency –
Child (& Parent)** To receive Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships, the parent and the child must be living together in Montana.
CPS Exception: Montana foster care children who reside outside of Montana and need child care, may use Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships.

Residency is established when the child and parent are living in Montana voluntarily with the intention of making a home here and not for a temporary purpose. A child is a resident of the state in which the parent, or person acting in loco parentis, is a resident. Residence does not depend on the reason for which the parent entered the state. The parent's written declaration of intent to reside permanently or seek employment in the state of Montana verifies the residency requirement. There is no durational requirement, such as having to reside in Montana for six months prior to obtaining a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

NOTE: Parents in the military, even though they may claim residency in another state, are considered to meet the residency requirements for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship purposes, since they are

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employed and are here for more than a temporary purpose.

Child Must Live with Parent The child must live with the parent, or the individual serving in loco parentis, applying for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship on behalf of the child.

Child's Age A child is eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, under Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), when the child meets any one of the following age categories:

- ☐ A child is eligible from birth through age 12.
- ☐ A child, who has special needs, is eligible through age 18.
 - The special needs must be verified by appropriate documentation from a physician, psychologist or licensed social worker.
- ☐ A child, who has special needs and is attending school (high school or equivalency program), is eligible through age 18.
 - The special needs must be verified by appropriate documentation from a physician, psychologist or licensed social worker.
- ☐ A child, who is under supervision of a court, is eligible through age 17.

Child's Relationship to Care Provider Not every care arrangement qualifies for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. A child is NOT eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship if the child is related to the child's care provider in any of the following ways:

- ☐ The child's care provider is the child's parent.
- ☐ The child's care facility is owned, entirely or in part, by the parent.
- ☐ The child's care provider is a member of the child's TANF Cash assistance unit.
- ☐ The child's care provider is a member of the child's Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship eligibility unit.